

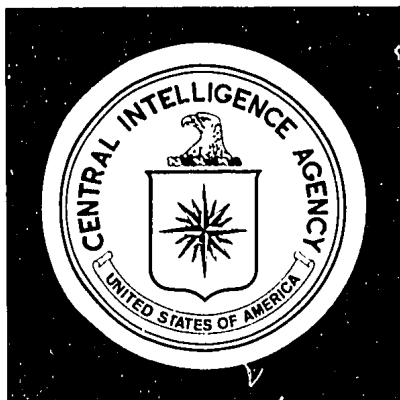
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DIRECTORATE OF  
INTELLIGENCE

# WEEKLY SUMMARY

## *Special Report*

*Libya: Arms Procurement*

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25 May 1973  
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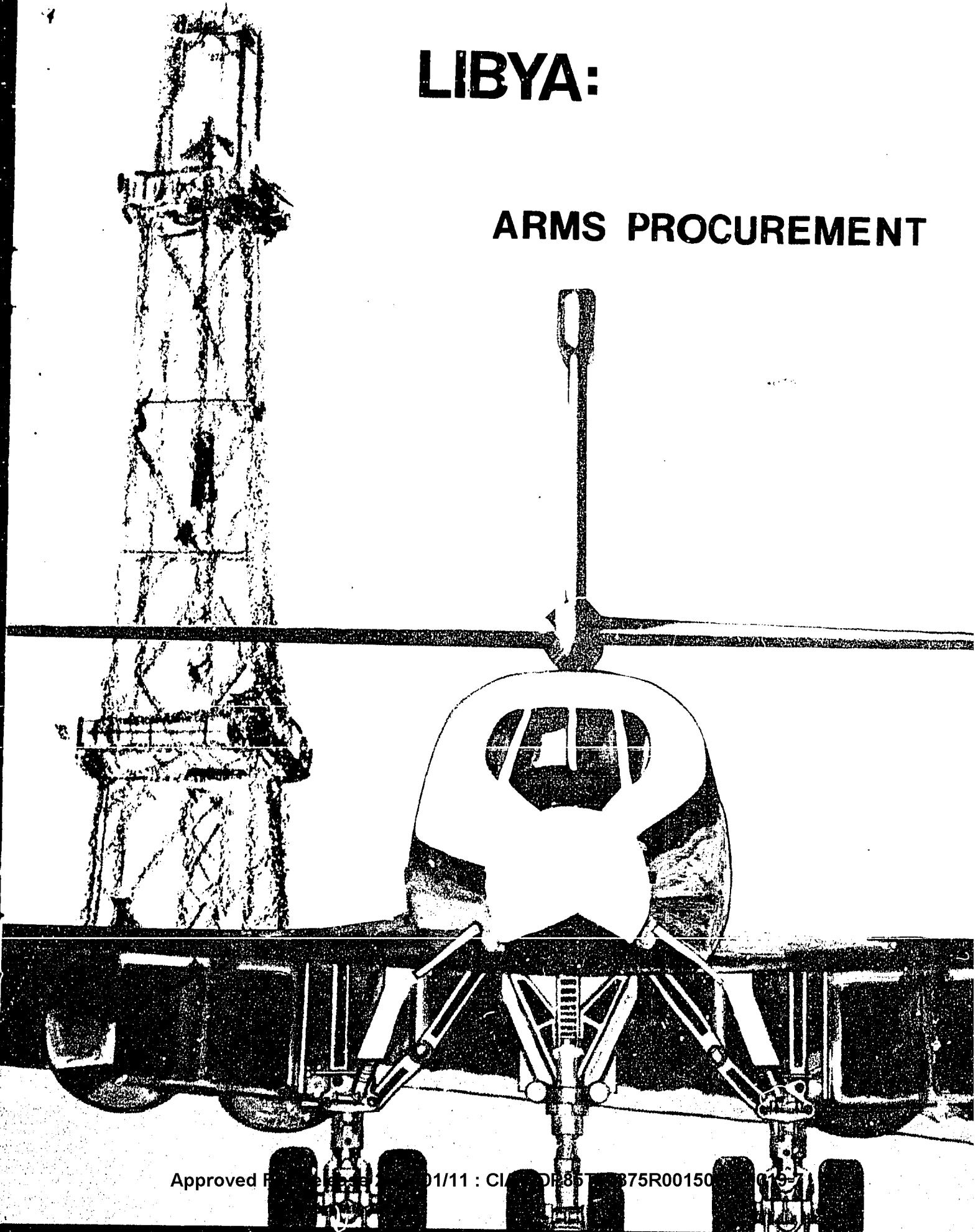
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# LIBYA:

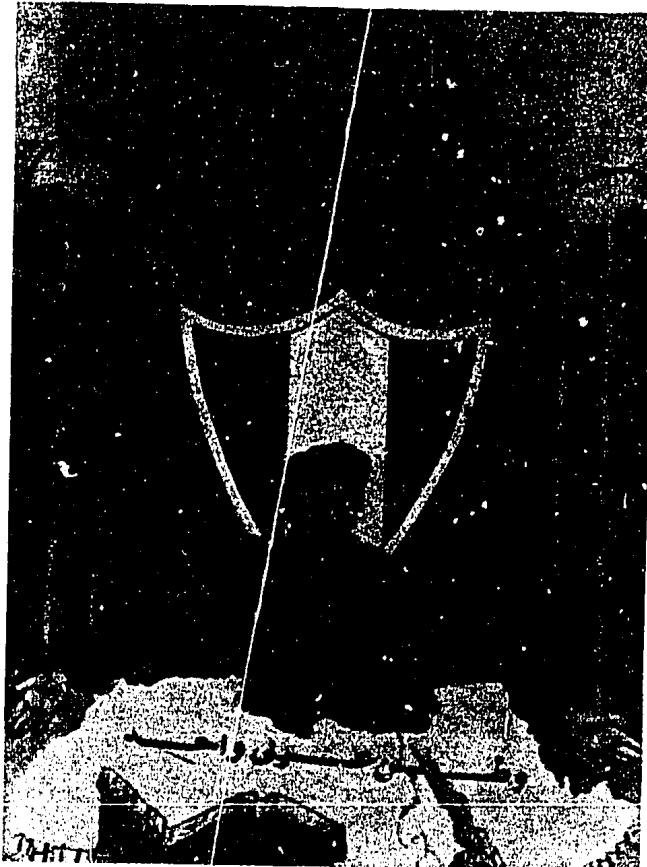
## ARMS PROCUREMENT



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**Qadhafi on Propaganda Poster**



**Summary**

Libya has concluded agreements for almost \$700 million worth of arms since the militant Qadhafi regime seized power in September 1969. Qadhafi has obtained advanced jet aircraft, surface-to-air missiles, complex naval equipment, and tanks. This equipment has come in large part from France and the USSR, which have replaced the US and the UK as Libya's chief source of weapons. Qadhafi's outlay for arms comes to \$330 per capita, one of the largest per capita figures for a developing country during the last three years. Because of its massive oil revenues, however, Libya will have no difficulty financing these purchases. Its chief problem will be to find enough competent people to operate and maintain its new equipment.

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**Pre-Coup Procurement**

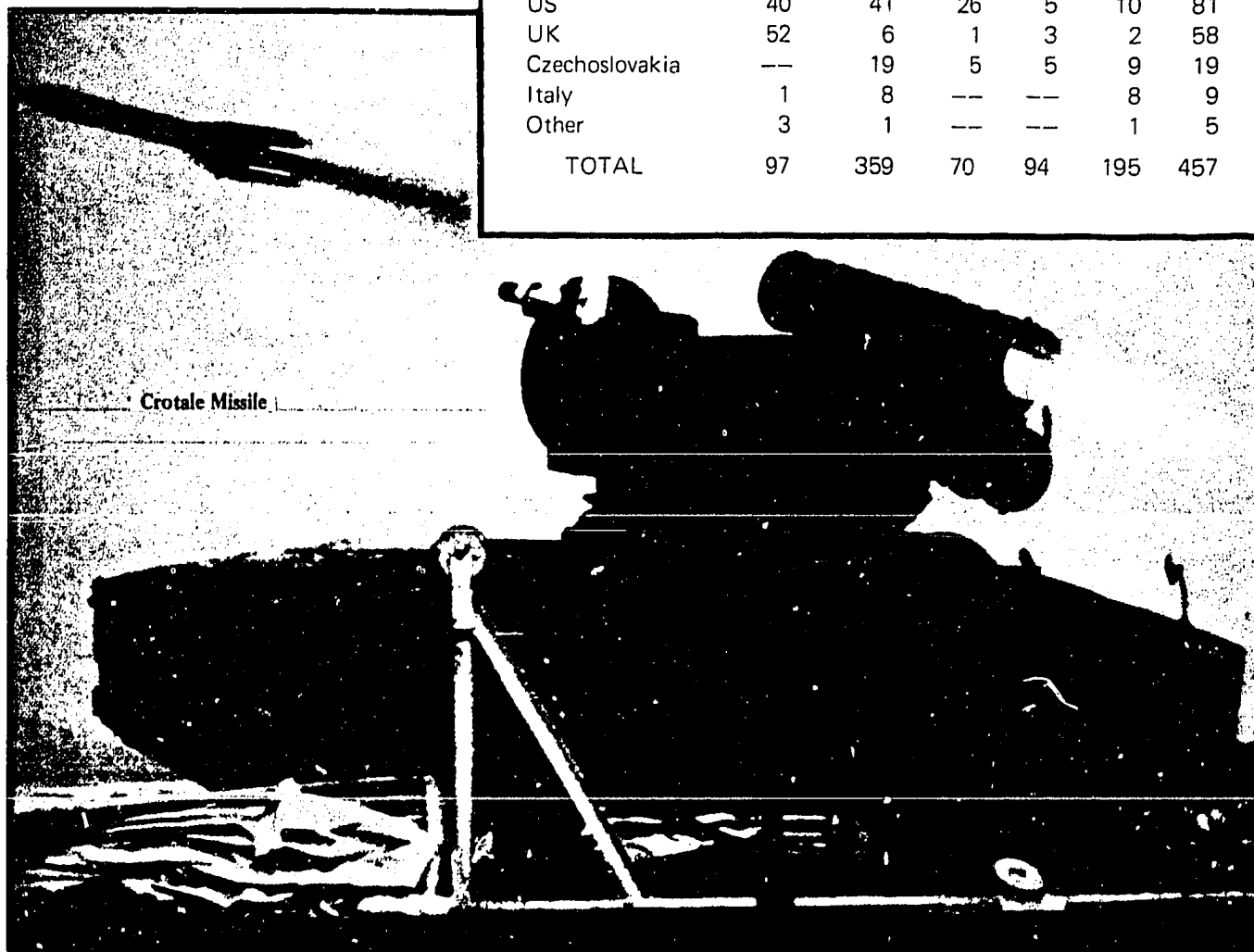
Libya launched a program to build up its armed forces in 1953, signing a 20-year defense pact with the UK. During the next 15 years, Tripoli received about \$50 million worth of British arms, training, and technical assistance. London provided an assortment of armored vehicles, artillery, small arms, gunboats, and patrol craft. Using its new-found oil wealth in the late 1960s, Libya moved to modernize its forces. In 1968-69, Tripoli contracted for almost \$370 million worth of Brit-

ish arms, including a complete air-defense system, Chieftain tanks, and a MARK-7 frigate.

The US program in Libya was initiated in 1957; by mid-1969, the US had delivered some \$40 million worth of aircraft, small arms,

**Arms Deliveries  
(Million US\$)**

	1952-69	1970-72	1970	1971	1972	Total
France	1	166	3	48	115	167
USSR	--	118	35	33	50	118
US	40	41	26	5	10	81
UK	52	6	1	3	2	58
Czechoslovakia	--	19	5	5	9	19
Italy	1	8	--	--	8	9
Other	3	1	--	--	1	5
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>359</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>195</b>	<b>457</b>



Croale Missile

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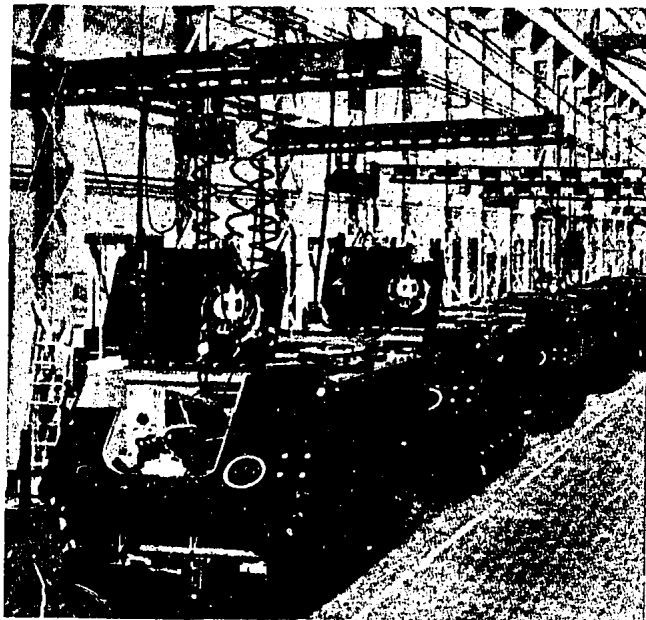
armored vehicles, and communications equipment. Aircraft deliveries included ten F-5s, four T-33 jet trainers, and a number of C-47 and C-140 transports. Eight additional F-5s were purchased in 1969, but Washington suspended the contract after the coup in September of that year.

### Impact of the Coup

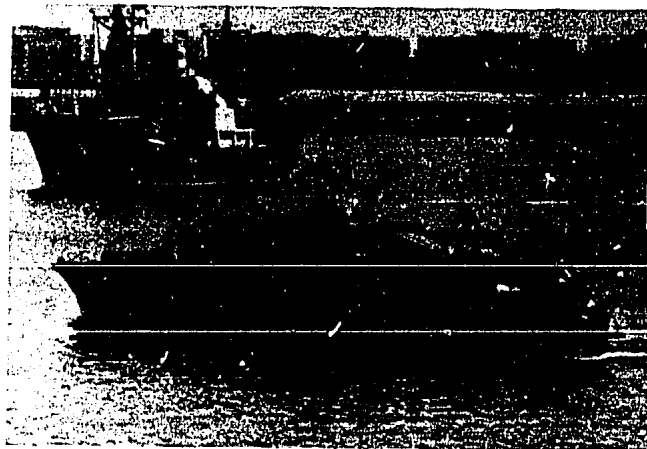
The Qadhafi-led Revolutionary Command Council that ousted the monarchy made it one of the first orders of business to expand and improve Libya's armed forces. Qadhafi considered that a stronger military force was needed to lend credibility to his commitment to an Arab war against Israel and his ambitions to be recognized as an Arab leader. Under his guidance, Tripoli has contracted for almost \$700 million worth of arms, of which an estimated \$360 million has been delivered.

Although Qadhafi has continued to purchase some arms from the UK and US, he has not been able to get from either country the advanced weapons he wants. Moreover, he questions whether the US and UK would be a reliable source of arms should there be a new outbreak of fighting in the Middle East. When Qadhafi requested delivery of the 200 sophisticated Chieftain tanks ordered from the UK in 1969, London declined, saying that these deliveries would upset the delicate Middle East arms balance. The British also refused to sell Chieftains to the Israelis. Libya then canceled the contract for the British air-defense system causing considerable unhappiness on the part of the British who had made a large investment in the development of the system. London eventually turned over the \$17 million MARK-7 frigate equipped with surface-to-surface and surface-to-air missiles. Two motor gunboats also have been delivered and several others are believed to be on order. Since 1969, Libya has bought from the UK only small arms; spare parts; and support, communications, and construction equipment.

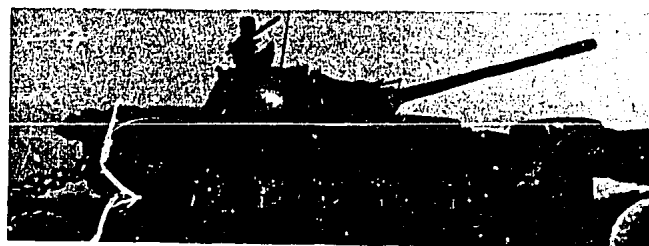
After the coup, Tripoli asked the US for delivery of the eight F-5s ordered earlier in 1969, but was informed that it would get only spares and "non-lethal" equipment from the US. Since



M113 Assembly Line in Italy



British-Supplied Patrol Boat



Soviet-Supplied T-55 Tank

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then, Tripoli has received eight C-130 transports and spare parts worth about \$40 million. Four additional C-130s were ordered in 1972 and negotiations are under way to purchase trucks, jeeps, aircraft spare parts, and support equipment.

#### **New Suppliers**

France and the USSR moved rapidly into the gap left by the UK and the US and today are Libya's principal arms suppliers. Paris was one of the first countries to recognize the military regime in Tripoli and has since sold Libya about \$410 million worth of arms. Within three months of the coup, the first French-Libyan agreement had been concluded, a contract for 110 Mirage III

and Mirage 5 aircraft worth at least \$250 million. A contract was signed several months later for six Alouette and eight Super Frelon helicopters. About 70 Mirages and all the helicopters have been delivered, and the rest of the Mirage contract is scheduled to be completed by early next year. Paris has tried to justify these sales on the ground that it was pre-empting the USSR in filling the vacuum created by the curtailment of sales to Libya by the UK and US.

Paris still finds Libya a lucrative arms market. In 1972, the Mirage contract was increased by ten aircraft. In late 1972, Libyan Prime Minister Jallud went to Paris with a new shopping list that included armored vehicles, patrol boats, and

#### **Military Technical Assistance**

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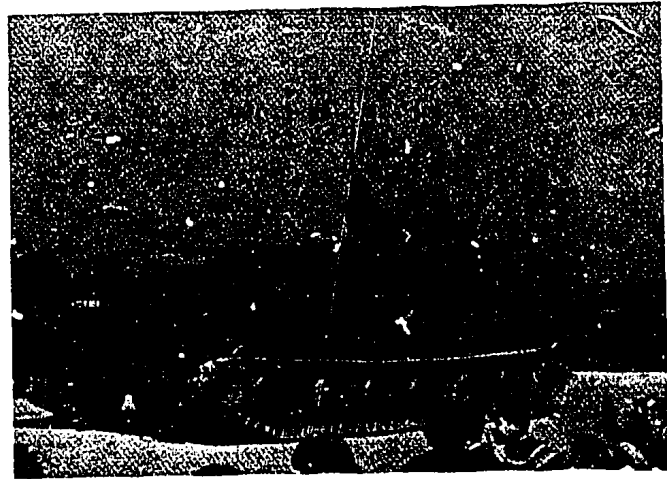
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the Exocet and Crotale missile systems. The only agreement signed, however, was for a \$140 million Crotale missile system to improve Tripoli's air defenses.

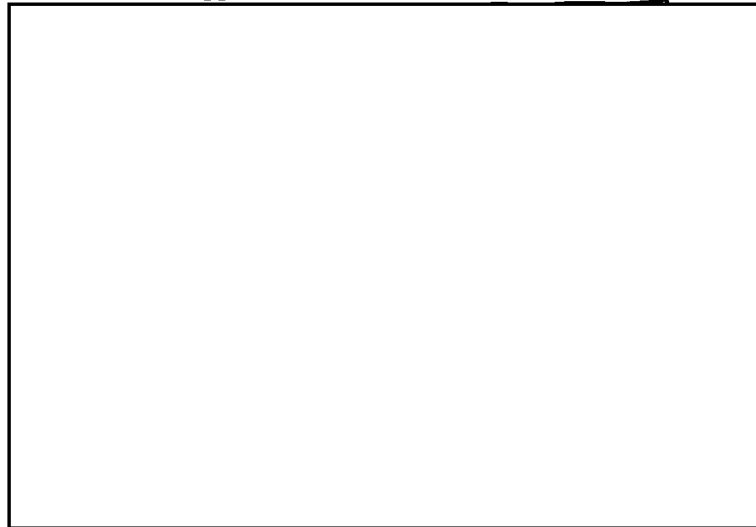
Moscow has also moved into the Libyan market and has sold Tripoli nearly \$130 million worth of arms. A representative of the Soviet Defense Ministry visited Libya only days after the coup, and the following November a Libyan military delegation went to Moscow. After protracted negotiations, a \$35 million agreement for ground forces equipment was signed in March 1970. Additional accords, totaling nearly \$95 million, were signed in 1971 and 1972. Altogether, the Libyans have agreed to buy 250 T-54/55 tanks, 130 BTR-60 armored personnel carriers, 30 ZSU-23-4 self-propelled antiaircraft guns, artillery, and radar. Tripoli has also purchased almost \$20 million worth of armored personnel carriers, tanks, and trucks from Czechoslovakia.

Qadhafi has so far limited his acquisitions from the USSR and Czechoslovakia to cash purchases of ground forces equipment. He has turned down Soviet offers of naval and military technical assistance, although he has allowed 1,200 Communist economic personnel to come into Libya.

Tripoli has contracted for \$70 million worth of arms from Italy, and Rome could supplant the Communist countries as a source of armored vehicles. Italy recently requested Washington's approval to sell a second order of 150 M-113 armored personnel carriers to Libya. These are manufactured in Italy under US license and cannot be exported to third countries without US approval. Such approval was granted last year for the first order of 150, and most have already been delivered. The US has also approved Rome's sales of 27 Boeing and Augusta-Bell helicopters to Libya. In addition, Italian firms have contracted to supply naval radar and to enlarge and modernize at least two airfields in Libya; the Italians are also negotiating to sell additional arms to Tripoli.



Czech-Supplied Armored Personnel Carrier



Mark-7 Frigate

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**Egypt's Expanded Role**

Qadhafi's fanatical commitment to Islam and his aversion to non-Arab values has caused him to limit the number of foreign military personnel allowed into the country to train Libyans. Consequently, he has turned to Egypt to fill his military training requirements. An Egyptian training mission of some 550 men accounts for 80 percent of the foreign military advisers in Libya.

Initially, Egypt provided three to four battalions of commando and security forces to bolster the new regime; two are still there. Subsequently, the Egyptians provided instructors to train Libyans to use T-34 tanks. Cairo has also provided some air force training and has stationed its own aircraft at Libyan airfields. Tripoli has about 1,300 officers and enlisted men training in Egypt, some 60 percent of those Libyans receiving military training abroad. About 300 are attending Egypt's military academy.

**Outlook**

Tripoli continues to search for arms and has the funds to purchase all it wants. It should find ready sources of supply unless a major conflict again erupts in the Middle East. The recent transfer of Mirage aircraft to Egypt may have annoyed Paris, but will not cause the French either to cancel existing orders or to curtail cash sales as long as the Mirages do not get involved in combat over Israel. Other Western suppliers—Italy, the UK, the US, and West Germany—also will go on providing spare parts and "non-lethal" equipment and some of these countries may also offer to sell Tripoli certain "lethal" weapons, including tanks and fighter aircraft.

If increased tension in the area were to curtail the flow of arms from the West, Qadhafi might turn to Moscow. The Soviet Union is prepared to move in quickly with a wide range of arms. In this event, Egyptian personnel could provide most of the necessary training and maintenance, thus avoiding the presence of large numbers of Communist military advisers, which Qadhafi finds distasteful. Libyans already have trained on Egypt's Soviet-supplied MIGs, TU-16 bombers, and naval craft.

Despite the accumulation of a large assortment of modern arms and several years of training, Libya's armed forces are ineffective. Sufficient personnel to man large quantities of modern and sophisticated equipment simply cannot be found in Libya's small and unskilled population. Libya will therefore continue to depend on foreign technicians to maintain the equipment and to operate large parts of it.

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